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FOR THE STUDENT, THE REPRESENTATIVE &



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. . . and . . .

JOSEPH EDWARDS.

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IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE SOCIALIST MOVEMENT.

THE Socialist Movement in the United States during the past year has gained in strength, both in organisation and in the open political field. The unfortunate division between the Socialist party and the Socialist Labour party is being obliterated through the growth of the former. Within a short time there will be but one Socialist political party in this country. I write this immediately after elections have taken place in ten different States, in all of which the Socialist party had tickets nominated, three of them (Kentucky, Rhode Island, and Maryland) for the first time. The result has been a decrease in some States and a gain in others. The largest decline was registered in Massachusetts, where the party gained phenomenally last year, following upon the great anthracite strike. This year a bitter onslaught was made upon the Socialists, the Republican and Democratic parties co-operating against the new party. An anti-Socialist campaign was conducted with vigour and virulence, and a special effort was made to prevent the return of James F. Carey to the State Legislature, where he has represented the fifth Haverhill district for five consecutive years. Carey's defeat was accomplished by a local trade union quarrel which divided the workers economically assisting in the result. Another legislative district, formerly represented for four years by the late Frederic O. MacCartney (whose untimely death removed a brilliant and promising figure) was also lost by 61 votes. W. C. Ransden, of Brockton, was re-elected State representative for a second term, and will be the only Socialist in the Massachusetts Legislature during next year. In the State at large the Socialist vote for Governor fell from 33,629 in 1902 to what is now estimated at 26,000.

Gains for Socialists.

The decline in Massachusetts was compensated for by a large gain in New York State, which is estimated to have increased its vote from 23,400 in 1902 to over 30,000 this year. The greatest increase was registered in the larger cities, notably Greater New York, Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester, Jamestown, and others. In Ohio, despite a battle between the Republicans, led by Senator Mark Hanna, and the Democrats, led by Tom Johnson, a noted single-taxer, the Socialist vote held its own generally, and will probably show a gain of three or four thousand over last year's vote of 14,270. In Pennsylvania the vote has probably declined, although the percentage of the total vote cast has increased over last year. In Iowa the same standing will be maintained, notwithstanding the extraordinary efforts made against the party in several districts by the Catholic Church and capitalist newspapers. An increase was secured in Nebraska, votes appearing in many small towns formerly unheard of. A decrease is reported from Colorado, but this is offset by the vote in Rhode Island and Maryland.

Party Organisation.

The Socialist party organisation has grown greatly in numbers and solidarity during the past year. In February last the National Committee removed the National head-quarters from St. Louis, Mo., to Omaha, Neb., from which point the work of party organising has been conducted on a scale never attempted before. Through the aid of a special organising fund National organisers and lecturers have invaded every State and territory, and at this writing eight organisers are in the field, with arrangements for more now pending. Lecturers are also making special tours, and this feature is being rapidly organised and developed. Besides this the affiliated State organisations are increasing their activities through State organisers and lecturers and the extensive distribution of literature. As a result of all this the total party membership has increased rapidly. The National Secretary's report in January, 1903, showed about 10,000 members, while dues were paid during last month (October) on 20,536 members.

The circulation of Socialist party papers, books, and pamphlets has also increased at an unprecedented rate.

Along with this growth and activity has naturally come added attention from the capitalist press and politicians. Socialism is now a common topic to be read and heard of everywhere. An interesting feature is the open antagonism manifested by Catholic bishops and priests in so many quarters that the suspicion of a well-planned, systematic campaign is justifiable. So far the Socialists have not assumed the aggressive in this matter, but have contented themselves with meeting the sophistries and misrepresentations of their clerical opponents with plain argument and explanation.

A Feeling of Unquiet.

At the present a strange feeling of unquiet pervades the United States. Distrust in the present and doubt in the future are expressed everywhere. A series of sharp declines in industrial stocks on Wall Street, the reduction in the working force and of wages in many industries, particularly railroads, the sharp and bitter conflicts between the organised capitalists and the organised workmen (in spite of numerous conciliatory organisations), all these and many more things have disturbed the smug capitalists and trust owners, with their supporters, and unsettled the public mind and peace. That something critical is right ahead is generally admitted. What turn affairs will take next year, when the Presidential election occurs, is a topic of wide conjecture. At present it looks as if the Republican party would continue the dominant one, and that the Democratic party would meet inglorious defeat. What will arise meanwhile out of the churn of discussion and agitation over existing and future conditions no one can foresee. But it is to meet whatever situation may develop that the Socialist party is educating and organising, systematically and persistently, so that the working class may triumph through the cause of Socialism.

National Head-quarters,
Socialist Party, Omaha, Neb.

WILLIAM MAILLY.